5: Davies G-5 (1894-1900) 1909 AF16 Southwest China AF16

had adopted as most likely to afford the easiest line for a railway, so that it was by this route that we set out to meet him.

As far as Ch'ü-ching there are two alternative roads, so Watts-Jones, leaving on the 30th March, took the main road through Ma-lung Chou, while I, starting four days later, went by a somewhat less frequented route through Yi-liang Hsien and Lu-liang Chou.

Ryder had so far failed to get the longitude of Yün-nan Fu from Bhamo, owing partly to the difficulty of getting a strong enough current over this distance of 500 miles of telegraph wire, and partly to the frequent occurrence of breaks, and to the general neglect of duty by the telegraph clerks, under the slack administration of the stout Manchu gentleman who presided over this department[1].

Ryder therefore decided to stay on in hopes of fixing this most important point. As it turned out, he waited there a month and had then to give it up as a bad job. However we were luckily able to get satisfactory observations in the following year.

On the 3rd of April I was able to get away and started off across the Yün-nan Fu plain. Several things here strike the traveller arriving from the west as new and peculiar. The rows of cypress trees along the irrigation embankments are one of the most conspicuous features of this part of the country; and the curious wheels which, worked by hand, draw the water up from the lakes and ponds into the irrigation channels, are not found in the plains of western Yün-nan, where nearly all the water is running. It is true indeed that these wheels are used in Yün-nan Hsien and other places west of the capital, but I have never seen them west of Ta-li.

But what struck me as most extraordinary was the use of carts. These I certainly did not expect to see in western China. I subsequently found them in use in nearly all the plains of eastern Yün-nan. They are very small and are drawn by one bullock or buffalo. They are only used for

[1] Mr Jensen was in no way responsible for the frequent breaks which occur in the Yün-nan telegraphs. His work was to keep the electrical instruments in order. The upkeep of the actual telegraph wire is in the hands of Chinese, who make as much money out of it as they can.